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~ on a vowel indicates nasalization.
' on a vowel marks the accentuation.

As far as possible I tried to give the pronunciation of the region of Embarcación, though Pedro spoke another dialect.

A. THE UNIVERSE

1. The Upper and the Lower World (Pedro)

There are two worlds, one above and the other below. Once the world above our heads was in the place of the earth where we live. But the earth (still further) below did not like to be soiled by the excrement of the people dwelling in the sky and therefore it changed places with the earth above. Formerly sky and earth were connected by a big tree (*niLɔk*). The men of this earth climbed up it and went to hunt in the world above. Once a number of them climbed up and succeeded in killing a jaguar. When they divided the meat, they foolishly gave the stomach to an old man. He was so indignant at getting such a miserable portion that he burned the tree, thereby avenging himself. The men who had climbed up could not get down and they still live in the sky. They are a constellation formed by many stars (Pleiades: *patseLai*).

When these first people went to the sky to hunt, they left their children at home. A mother, knowing she would never again rejoin her child on earth, threw him from the sky a deer skin bag filled with honey. The children grew up, they were our fathers.

2. The Compartments of the World (Pedro)

The world is divided into three compartments; the earth the sky and the underworld. In the underworld there are fields like those we have here. The underworld is the abode of the dead. We know it is because we can go there in our dreams to visit our dead relatives. The medicine-men also

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know it. When the sun does not shine upon the earth, it goes down to the underworld. Then the stars and the moon climb out and shine on the earth.

B. DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD

3. The Great Flood (Pedro)

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The rainbow doesn't like menstruating women. Once a menstruating woman was killed and eaten by the rainbow. As a consequence there were heavy rains and a great flood. When the water receded large pools remained as witnesses of that flood.

4. The Great Fire (Pedro)

On the horizon at the end of the world, there are great fires that burn day and night with no one to tend them. On these fires are large pots in which food is always cooking. There is no one to put the pots on or to remove them. An old man who was travelling in that country saw the pots, but he was not allowed to go near them.

One must never speak of prairies with high grass as the fire would hear and spread itself through the world as it did once before. At that time it burned all the animals and plants. A man and a woman escaped by diving into the water and concealing themselves in the bed of a river. When they left the water they found nothing, not even a tree in whose shade they could sit. A little bird (*tapiatsón*) took his drum and started to beat it close to the stump of a *sopxwayúk* tree[1] just as the Matako do when the algarroba (Prosopis juliflora) is ripening. The trunk grew higher and higher until after a score of days it was a tree with leaves whose shade sheltered the new men. With the tree the forest began to grow again and after a while the world was

[1] In Spanish, *palo zapallo*

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of the dead the *āhat* hunts, gathers fruit and goes fishing for food. When he arrives at the abode of the dead, his people come to meet him and they take him to their house. 775

6) The dead inhabit a region of their own situated under the one we live in. When it is daylight here it is dark in their region. [772]

The *āhat* sleep during the day and at night search for food. They feed on dead animals and fish. Their life is exactly the same as that of living persons. They have underground fields and lagoons. They cultivate the earth the same as we do, raise animals and go fishing.

The *āhat* fight each other like the living Bolivians and Paraguayans do. The spirits of the Matako are at war with those of the Toba.

7) A dead person is called an *āhat*. The *āhat* live in the bush and appear only at night. We do not know exactly what they do in the bush nor what they eat. Some of them may be good. The medicine-men may talk with them and learn what is going to happen. For instance, they predict disease and future death. [787]

8) When a man sees an *āhat* he will die unless he is a medicine-man. When a person is dying an *āhat* comes and steals his fire. [761]

9) When the north wind blows very hard, the *āhat* leave their abode and walk about the earth looking for uninhabited places. If they see a man they vanish under the earth, but sometimes they are seen from afar. Frequently the *āhat* transform themselves into the north wind, which brings storms. [821]

10) If you dream that you are visiting the land of the *āhat* and one of them invites you to eat, you must refuse. If you accept you may die during the following year.

II. The Medicine-men and the Big Fire

A medicine-man may call on the Big Fire at the end of the world. On the journey he crosses first a rainy area and then he comes to a dark zone where it is impossible to see. 756 773